



PEFC Certification System Netherlands - Summary of the Standard Setting Process

PEFC Netherlands

Postbus 186
3990 DD Houten
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 30 693 0040
Fax: +31 30 692 5045
E-mail: info@pefcnederland.nl
Web: www.pefcnederland.nl



Content

1	Introduction	3
2	Establishment of PEFC Netherlands	3
3	Development of Standard Setting Procedures	3
4	Inviting of the National PEFC Forum	3
4.1	participants in the National PEFC Forum.....	3
4.2	Stakeholder participation and commitment.....	4
5	National PEFC Forum Meetings	4
5.1	Start Forum meeting 5 March 2009	4
5.2	Second Forum meeting 16 April 2009	4
5.3	Third Forum meeting 16 June 2009.....	5
5.4	Fourth Forum meeting 10 September 2009	5
5.5	Fifth Forum meeting 8 October 2009	5
5.6	Sixth Forum meeting 14 January 2010	5
5.7	Seventh Forum meeting 18 February 2010	5
5.8	Eighth Forum meeting 13 October 2010.....	6
5.9	E-mail Forum Consultations	6
6	Public Consultation.....	6
7	Pilot Testing	6
8	Final Approval by National PEFC Forum	7
9	Formal Approval by General Assembly of PEFC NL.....	7

1 Introduction

This document is the summary of the standard setting process of the PEFC Standard Netherlands. The setting of the standard was initiated in 2007 when several Dutch representative organizations, Dutch Association of Forest Contractors and Roundwood Processing Industries (AVIH), the Royal Association of Dutch Paper and Board Industries (VNP) and the Federation of Private Forest Owners (FPG), felt the need for establishing a PEFC organization in the Netherlands. With an alternative forest certification system it was hoped that the remaining 60% of the Dutch forest area not yet certified, could become PEFC certified. With this increase more certified timber can be harvested from Dutch forests. In order for PEFC certification to become successful in The Netherlands, the PEFC standard for sustainable forest management has to be simple, put trust in the forest owner and cost of certification has to be as low as possible. This was the task of the National PEFC Forum

2 Establishment of PEFC Netherlands

The association PEFC Netherlands was founded on 8 May 2008 by the before mentioned AVIH and FPG together with De Marke Foundation and Biomassa Stroomlijn. PEFC Netherlands applied for membership of the PEFC Council in order to become the official National Governing Body for The Netherlands. On 8 August 2008 the membership of PEFC Netherlands was approved by the PEFC Council.

3 Development of Standard Setting Procedures

The Standard Setting Procedures (PCSN V) have been established based on several other PEFC members' procedures. Key to the procedures are the provisions for balanced representation of different interest groups and to guarantee that no interest group can dominate the decision making. The members of the National PEFC Forum are assigned to one out of five different interest groups. In case consensus cannot be reached there will be a voting in which each group has one vote. In the end discussion in the National PEFC Forum never resulted in sustained opposition and consensus was always reached. The Standard Setting Procedures have been explained to the Forum members during the first meeting and no requests for amendments were made.

4 Inviting of the National PEFC Forum

4.1 participants in the National PEFC Forum

In December 2008 PEFC Netherlands sent out invitations to the identified relevant stakeholders to invite them to the starting meeting of the National PEFC Forum on 5 March 2009. The identification of the different stakeholders was done by PEFC Netherlands together with the independent Chairman of the National PEFC Forum, Mr. Anton van

Weelderen. In total 43 organizations were identified. After the invitations we received positive reactions from 23 organizations. The organizations invited in the NGO group all refused participation in the Forum. During the process several organizations withdrew from the process, either by lack of interest or due to time constraints. Never due to any conflicts. Some just never answered to any communications on behalf of the Forum. The final version of the PEFC Standard Netherlands has been approved by 17 organizations.

4.2 Stakeholder participation and commitment

Although about 23 organizations initially participated in the National PEFC Forum, the active participation in National PEFC Forum meetings was limited to a couple of organizations mainly from the Forest Owner interest group, some organizations from the Processing industry and one representative from a trade union (CNV). The standard itself has been developed by a working group in the Forum and this working group has sent on several occasions draft standards for review and approval to the entire Forum. The working group meetings consisted of the following representatives: Mr. Ekko Aertsen representing State forest owners (NVBE sectie overheden), Mr. Frederik van Tuyl representing private forest owners (FPG), Mr. Klingen representing the provincial private forest owners (De Landschappen) as external expert, Mr Nico Leek and Mr Jaap van den Briel representing the wood processing sector (Platform Hout Nederland), Mr Erik van der Staak representing the Royal Dutch Association of Forestry (KNBV).

5 National PEFC Forum Meetings

In total there have been 8 physical meetings of either the National PEFC Forum. Besides the meetings where draft documents were discussed and changes to the standard were made there have been three rounds of consulting the National PEFC Forum by e-mail. These were mainly for seeking formal approval of draft standards.

5.1 Start Forum meeting 5 March 2009

The start meeting was mainly used for getting acquainted, explaining the standard setting process and timeline and expectations of the outcome. The lacking of NGO support was discussed. As a first step it was decided to check to what extent the PEOLG requirements are covered by Dutch laws and regulations.

5.2 Second Forum meeting 16 April 2009

At the second meeting the scope of certification was linked to the new definition of forest as proposed by the Forest Authority (Bosschap) to the Ministry of Agriculture (27 June 2008) and a proposal was made to divide forest owners into different size classes. The link between Dutch law and PEOLG was presented and it was agreed to further investigate the PEOLG requirements not covered by law.

5.3 Third Forum meeting 16 June 2009

A first draft standard is presented and discussed. This draft relies heavily on PEOLG structure. Structure contains a lot of double requirements at first sight, but there's a distinction between management and operational criteria. The German standard appeals to the Forum as it is compact, approved by PEFC Council and by TPAC. The Working Group will translate the German standard to the Dutch context.

5.4 Fourth Forum meeting 10 September 2009

In the fourth meeting the Forum approved several normative documents: College of Appeal procedures (PCSN VII), Implementation of Forest Management Certification (PCSN II), Certification Procedures (PCSN IV) and an amendment to the Standard Setting Procedures. The name of the standard (PEFC Standard Netherlands) and of the scheme (PEFC Certification System Netherlands) are established.

It is agreed that all originally invited organizations will also be personally invited to the Public Consultation

The draft standard has been shared with the Forum. The draft and the comments are discussed in the Forum. The meeting is suspended and the discussion will be continued in a next meeting.

5.5 Fifth Forum meeting 8 October 2009

Continuation of the last meeting. The standard is amended based on Forum comments and discussion during the meeting. As only part of the Forum is present, the new draft, that will be used for the Public Consultation will be shared with all Forum members in order to approve the draft or to comment on it. First PEFC secretariat will process changes to the standard and consult present members on the correct adjustment by e-mail

5.6 Sixth Forum meeting 14 January 2010

As the adjustments to the standard stirred up an e-mail discussion, it is decided to first discuss current issues in order to make the correct adaptations to the standard before sending it to the entire Forum. Key issues to be discussed is the biomass off-take from forests. Consensus is reached in the solution that harvesting crown and branches is only allowed on rich soils. The amendments will be processed and after approval of correct adaptation the standard will be sent to all Forum member for comments/approval.

5.7 Seventh Forum meeting 18 February 2010

In this meeting the comments of the complete Forum on the draft for Public Consultation was discussed. The comments are discussed and amendments to the standard are made. The final version of the Standard for Public Consultation will be sent to the Forum members to ask for their formal approval to use this version for the public consultation.

5.8 Eighth Forum meeting 13 October 2010

The last physical meeting of the National PEFC Forum. In this meeting the comments from the Public Consultation were discussed, commented and amendments made. The amendments will be done by the PEFC secretariat that will check with the present members by e-mail whether the adaptations were made correctly.

5.9 E-mail Forum Consultations

After each meeting where amendments to any draft version were made, the correct adjustment of the standard was verified with the persons present at that meeting. Three times the Forum has been asked to formally approve a specific draft or final version of the Forum. The formal approval via e-mail was used as a way to demonstrate consensus on the standard by all Forum members.

6 Public Consultation

The public consultation was held from 12 April 2010 to 11 June 2010. The announcement of the public consultation was done through a press release to timber/paper and forestry related media (with quite well uptake). Further the announcement was in our April 2010 newsletter and on the front page of our website. To all parties that were invited for the National PEFC Forum, but that did not want to participate the draft standard for public consultation was personally send/e-mailed with a request to comment.

During the 60 days we received comments from about 10 persons/organizations. The PEFC secretariat collected all comments and compiled them into one document. This document then was discussed in the Forum, where a formal reaction to the comment was given and any subsequent change to the standard.

The complete list of all comments, reactions from the Forum and subsequent amendments to the was published on our website and put to the attention through an item in our newsletter.

7 Pilot Testing

After the public consultation and the amendments to the PEFC Standard Netherlands there was the standard version for pilot testing. Several consultants were approached and some offered their services to PEFC Netherlands. The choice was made to have the pilot test performed by Form International at two forest owners (not yet certified). One micro forest owner (Estate "De Bokhorst") and one large forest owner (Municipality Venray, whose forest are managed by Foundation "De Marke"). The pilot test were performed in April and May 2011.

The report of the two pilot tests by Form International concluded that the PEFC Standard Netherlands was a practical document that has proven to be auditable in practice. Form International also made some recommendations to improve/change the standard. These recommendations were discussed with the active Forum members by e-mail after which

amendments were made. For the Final version of the PEFC Standard Netherlands, again the approval was asked from the entire National PEFC Forum.

8 Final Approval by National PEFC Forum

The last amendments to the standard were made after the pilot test during an e-mail consultation with the active Forum members that were involved in the National Forum meetings. Although little changes were made in the version after the Public Consultation it was decided the entire National PEFC Forum should once again give its formal approval (by e-mail) as a final proof of reaching consensus on the final contents of the PEFC Standard Netherlands. After the Forum members approved the final version it was time to have the standard formally adopted by the members of the PEFC NL General Assembly.

9 Formal Approval by General Assembly of PEFC NL

The standard setting procedures of the PCSN scheme dictate that the standard and normative documents shall be formally approved by the General Assembly of PEFC Netherlands after the National PEFC Forum has reached consensus on the final version of the standard. The PEFC NL General Assembly was held on 24 November 2011. About 30 members were present and the standard was unanimously approved by a show of hands.